

Effective 5/12/2015

76-5-109 Child abuse -- Child abandonment.

(1) As used in this section:

(a) "Child" means a human being who is under 18 years of age.

(b)

(i) "Child abandonment" means that a parent or legal guardian of a child:

(A) intentionally ceases to maintain physical custody of the child;

(B) intentionally fails to make reasonable arrangements for the safety, care, and physical custody of the child; and

(C)

(I) intentionally fails to provide the child with food, shelter, or clothing;

(II) manifests an intent to permanently not resume physical custody of the child; or

(III) for a period of at least 30 days:

(Aa) intentionally fails to resume physical custody of the child; and

(Bb) fails to manifest a genuine intent to resume physical custody of the child.

(ii) "Child abandonment" does not include:

(A) safe relinquishment of a child pursuant to the provisions of Section 62A-4a-802; or

(B) giving legal consent to a court order for termination of parental rights:

(I) in a legal adoption proceeding; or

(II) in a case where a petition for the termination of parental rights, or the termination of a guardianship, has been filed.

(c) "Child abuse" means any offense described in Subsection (2), (3), or (4) or in Section 76-5-109.1.

(d) "Enterprise" is as defined in Section 76-10-1602.

(e) "Physical injury" means an injury to or condition of a child which impairs the physical condition of the child, including:

(i) a bruise or other contusion of the skin;

(ii) a minor laceration or abrasion;

(iii) failure to thrive or malnutrition; or

(iv) any other condition which imperils the child's health or welfare and which is not a serious physical injury as defined in Subsection (1)(f).

(f)

(i) "Serious physical injury" means any physical injury or set of injuries that:

(A) seriously impairs the child's health;

(B) involves physical torture;

(C) causes serious emotional harm to the child; or

(D) involves a substantial risk of death to the child.

(ii) "Serious physical injury" includes:

(A) fracture of any bone or bones;

(B) intracranial bleeding, swelling or contusion of the brain, whether caused by blows, shaking, or causing the child's head to impact with an object or surface;

(C) any burn, including burns inflicted by hot water, or those caused by placing a hot object upon the skin or body of the child;

(D) any injury caused by use of a dangerous weapon as defined in Section 76-1-601;

(E) any combination of two or more physical injuries inflicted by the same person, either at the same time or on different occasions;

(F) any damage to internal organs of the body;

- (G) any conduct toward a child that results in severe emotional harm, severe developmental delay or intellectual disability, or severe impairment of the child's ability to function;
 - (H) any injury that creates a permanent disfigurement or protracted loss or impairment of the function of a bodily member, limb, or organ;
 - (I) any conduct that causes a child to cease breathing, even if resuscitation is successful following the conduct; or
 - (J) any conduct that results in starvation or failure to thrive or malnutrition that jeopardizes the child's life.
- (2) Any person who inflicts upon a child serious physical injury or, having the care or custody of such child, causes or permits another to inflict serious physical injury upon a child is guilty of an offense as follows:
- (a) if done intentionally or knowingly, the offense is a felony of the second degree;
 - (b) if done recklessly, the offense is a felony of the third degree; or
 - (c) if done with criminal negligence, the offense is a class A misdemeanor.
- (3) Any person who inflicts upon a child physical injury or, having the care or custody of such child, causes or permits another to inflict physical injury upon a child is guilty of an offense as follows:
- (a) if done intentionally or knowingly, the offense is a class A misdemeanor;
 - (b) if done recklessly, the offense is a class B misdemeanor; or
 - (c) if done with criminal negligence, the offense is a class C misdemeanor.
- (4) A person who commits child abandonment, or encourages or causes another to commit child abandonment, or an enterprise that encourages, commands, or causes another to commit child abandonment, is:
- (a) except as provided in Subsection (4)(b), guilty of a felony of the third degree; or
 - (b) guilty of a felony of the second degree, if, as a result of the child abandonment:
 - (i) the child suffers a serious physical injury; or
 - (ii) the person or enterprise receives, directly or indirectly, any benefit.
- (5)
- (a) In addition to the penalty described in Subsection (4)(b), the court may order the person or enterprise described in Subsection (4)(b)(ii) to pay the costs of investigating and prosecuting the offense and the costs of securing any forfeiture provided for under Subsection (5)(b).
 - (b) Any tangible or pecuniary benefit received under Subsection (4)(b)(ii) is subject to criminal or civil forfeiture pursuant to Title 24, Forfeiture and Disposition of Property Act.
- (6) A parent or legal guardian who provides a child with treatment by spiritual means alone through prayer, in lieu of medical treatment, in accordance with the tenets and practices of an established church or religious denomination of which the parent or legal guardian is a member or adherent shall not, for that reason alone, be considered to have committed an offense under this section.
- (7) A parent or guardian of a child does not violate this section by selecting a treatment option for the medical condition of the child, if the treatment option is one that a reasonable parent or guardian would believe to be in the best interest of the child.
- (8) A person is not guilty of an offense under this section for conduct that constitutes:
- (a) reasonable discipline or management of a child, including withholding privileges;
 - (b) conduct described in Section 76-2-401; or
 - (c) the use of reasonable and necessary physical restraint or force on a child:
 - (i) in self-defense;
 - (ii) in defense of others;
 - (iii) to protect the child; or

(iv) to remove a weapon in the possession of a child for any of the reasons described in Subsections (8)(c)(i) through (iii).

Amended by Chapter 258, 2015 General Session